

CONTROVERSIAL.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

The Editors reserve the right to erase all improper personalities and objectionable expressions found in any article accepted for this department; and they alone shall be the judges.

One Word, Plus a Few More.

BY C. H. BALSBAUGH.

To J. W. Beer, of California :

I admire the spirit of your "Cuneus Cuneum Trudit," in No. 48. You are manifestly careful of the feelings of those whom you criticise, which is Christian so long as it is subordinate to the love of truth. It you have been a discriminating reader of my productions for the last five years, you are familiar with my persistent adhesion that the divine Incarnation is the pivot fact in the economy of God by which everything is determined. This necessarily subjects me to much misapprehension and adverse criticism. Had Dr. Miller known me through my writings as well as he knows some others, he would have left unsaid many things in his criticism in No. 48.

I am far enough from the thought of entering into controversy with you or any one else. It is seldom well done. Self gains the supremacy and the cross is forgotten. You and I know by experience how difficult to have our views assailed and not feel assailed ourselves. It is a downright shame that Christians so seldom exalt Christ in controversy without becoming unchristian. There is not much of sentiment that I would blot in my past public writings, but much in spirit. And so of many articles I have read in this paper. It works no good, but vast harm, and most to the writers.

What is the "original wheat" to which you refer? Please remember my hobby, as Bashor calls it, the Incarnation. Interpret every line you read from my pen by that verity. "Not seeds, as of many, but seed, which is Christ." This is the "original wheat." There is no other in God's garner. The elect germinate out of that original seed. Keeping this fundamental fact in view, you cannot help seeing, if you read my "Siftings sifted," that the "original wheat" was not "lost in the process." This will also correct your misapprehension about the "circuitous way of reiterating what brother Roberts said." You admit that "the Grammar of God will stand," and that Grammar is nothing less than "the Word made flesh," which we must eat so that God may be incarnate in us. I ignore neither Webster nor Brown in philology, any more than Tyndall or Clifford in science; but when either intrude into ethics I say, stand back, you have no business here. Both you and Miller insist that the external symbols of religion "are conditions by which that saved condition Purity, is retained." This truth I never questioned, and hope I never will. But it does not touch the thought that runs through my "Siftings sifted." The question is, is there a vital bond between God and the manifestations of Himself, and is this also true of the saints? When this is admitted, and realized, no one will have the heart to raise the question of essentiality in relation to the legitimate expressions of divine life. I "sneer" at no one, be he learned or ignorant, neither do I allow literary titles to blind me to misapprehensions of the truth as it is in Jesus. The mind is externally expansive, and I believe in the largest possible attainments of knowledge, but we may be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." The Christendom of to-day is full of intellectual giants who know not the first principle of the Grammar of God. "Knowledge puffeth up, charity edifieth." To know God and His Christ: this is salvation.

A Methodist Sister's Exhortation.

"Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."—Psalms 133: 1.

The Psalmist sweetly compares this unity to heavenly dew and precious ointment. I notice a spirit a trifle bitter between some of the brethren whose contributions appear in this paper. Controversy is not always profitable as it engenders strife, causes hatred to spring up in the heart where only the Spirit should dwell, and the Holy Spirit cannot dwell in the heart where hatred exists. "He that sayeth he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in darkness until now."

The servant of Christ is as a city set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin."

What will the world think of brethren who give more attention to doctrinal points than to the inner cleanness? Will it not have a tendency to drive them from the church and cause them to disregard the calls to accept our Lord's Christianity? Oh, let us who love dear Jesus be knit together as one, no matter about the church we love best, and to which we belong, that the blood of others be not found upon our garments. I am a Methodist through and through; have been immersed, believe in certain ceremonies, but consider none of them so important as the sweet fruits of the spirit; and I can give the hand of fellowship to every one that loves our dear Redeemer. Oh let us love one another. "Not long may we stay in this bleak world of mourning, so brief is life's day." Let us throw aside all that may offend our brother, and live and work for dear Jesus by helping each other in our pilgrim journey.

Are we walking in the light
With our garments clean and white?
Are we serving one another?
Do we truly love our brother?
Does the blessed "Meek and Lowly"
Cleanse us now and cleanse us wholly?
Are we walking in the light?

MRS. HARRIET JONES.

Oran, N. Y., Dec. 15, 1885.

Who are the Happy?

Many unconverted people suppose that the profession of Christianity takes the happiness and enjoyment that may be experienced in this; and that uniting with the church means a state of sadness in this world. There is nothing that could be further from the truth. The true Christian is a most happy person, and his life is an unbroken season of enjoyment. There is no fear dwelling in his heart and in whatever situation he is, contentment is his associate and Jesus his preserver. His strong hope casts a ray of glory upon every event of life that seems to bring nearer the crown of righteousness and his whole thought dwells in the realms of the eternal. The devoted Christian experiences enjoyment, a hundred-fold, in this life.

Acts not Words.

Your life has a more impressive and persuasive utterance than language.—Men are not so much impressed with what you say as with what you are. It is that something behind language, called character, that gives it force.—Mere language may be the vehicle of falsehood as well as truth; the life is self-expressive. Few men can long appear to be what they are not: their real self will show through the thin disguise. Some unguarded word, some act, or temper, will bring to light what their language was designed to conceal.—The real man will rise to the surface; and the world will take you for just what you are. A bad light sends forth a lurid and sulphurous flame, destructive to all within its range; a good one is like a stream of sunlight, poured from the upper skies upon the darkness of our earth.—ZION'S HERALD.

Wanted!

We want in you a Christianity that is Christian across counters, over dinner tables, behind the neighbor's back as in his face.—We want in you a Christianity that we can find in the temperance of the meal, in moderation of dress, in respect for authority, in amiability at home, in veracity and simplicity in mixed society. Rowland Hill used to say that he would give very little for the religion of a man whose very dog and cat were not the better for his religion. We want fewer gossiping, slandering, gluttonous, peevish, conceited bigoted Christians. To make them effectual, all our public religious measures, institutions, benevolent agencies, missions, need to be managed on a high-toned, scrupulous, and unquestionable sense of honor, without evasion, or partizanship, or over-much of the serpent's cunning. The hand that gives away the Bible must be unspotted from the world. The money that sends the missionary to the heathen must be honestly earned.—Ex.

No joy is ever given freely forth that does not have quick echo in the giver's heart.

Patience without energy, is nothing more than a respectable kind of laziness.

He who prays without confidence, cannot hope that his prayer will be granted.

Scraps from the Wayside.

By the request of brother Noah Heeter I went to Akron to hold a few meetings, and called on brother Samuel Pontius, where I was well entertained. There not being any appointment that evening we had to wait until the following evening, and met quite an audience of attentive listeners. We continued for a week and had a good interest manifested, but no accessions. From there I went to Tiosa, Indiana, where I had an appointment on Saturday evening. Brother Samuel Pontius accompanied me to place of meeting. We found the Brethren in good spirits and a large audience to commence with. After preaching we extended an invitation and two precious souls came out on the Lord's side, and on Lord's day we had the pleasure of leading them down into the yielding waves, in obedience to the great commission.

The Brethren at Tiosa have a large comfortable church house to worship in, "where none dare molest or make them afraid." They can truly rest under their own vine and fig tree." The erection of this house is due largely to the untiring interest of brother Jacob Miller, and family, and brother Wm. Wolf. Brother Fitzgerald is preaching for them. May the Lord bless the good work all o'er this land.

Next I visited the Brethren at Indian Creek, Elkhart county, Ind. Was met at the train by brother Wm. Osborn, and had a six mile ride through the rain and storm. We had a very fair audience that evening considering the weather. I will commence a protracted meeting at that place the 31st of this month (Dec). Brother R. K. Binkley filled my appointment at Roann for which he has our sincere thanks.

The Brethren at Roann lost an efficient member this summer in the person of sister Sarah Meyers, wife of brother Albert Meyers. Her seat is vacant at public service as well as in the home. She is missed in the prayer and social meetings, but while it is our loss we hope it is her eternal gain, on the shore of that better land, where friends will meet again.

To-morrow I go to Bracken, the home of our childhood, to tell the old story of the cross at the place where we first tried to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come.

I have been home several days on account of the sickness of our little daughter, Ota. More anon.

WM. W. SUMMERS.

North Manchester, Ind., Dec. 19, '84.

Remarks on the Old and New Year.

BY BELL WILT.

The year eighteen hundred and eighty-four has now rolled into eternity. To some it is as a passing dream; to others the stern realities of the months past declare it no wandering vision of the mind, but tells them unmistakably that it is a reality. Here let us pause for a moment and inquire and review. Have we done our duty toward men, brethren, sisters, and God? An impartial examination will undoubtedly draw from us the true but unpleasant confession, we have not.

As we find ourselves short in good works this year, let us, as we enter upon the New Year, ask God to forgive us our negligence of the past, and implore his help for the future. Let us renew our covenant with God, and double our diligence in this coming year. Many of us, no doubt, on New Year's morning will say, "well I have lived to see the close of another year, and now I am entering upon a new one." Some of us will not live to see it closed. God only knows how many. But we do know many things and it is our privilege and duty to know many more. One thing at least we are certain of, that is, that we must die. The time and place we know not. It becomes us then to be working while it is day with us, so that when we have seen our last New Year's morning, and have witnessed the departure of the last old year, that we may pass to a better and a happier world, where time will be no more—Berlin Pa., Dec. 21, 1884.

Queen Caroline with a diamond wrote on the window of her palace: "Lord make others great; keep me innocent."

He is not patient who will not suffer a certain degree of evil, and only from particular persons.

There is no man so far off that the arm of Christ cannot reach him; there is no man so sinful that the blood of Christ cannot cleanse him; there is no man so hardened that the Spirit of God cannot soften his hard heart.